

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0681

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: GOVERNMENT CONCERNED OVER BOMBS

REF: LISBON 0642 (DTG 291702Z JAN 76)

SUMMARY: MINISTER OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION ALMEIDA E COSTA
AND LISBON REGION COMMANDER VASCO LOURENCO EXPRESSED CONCERN
OVER RISE IN BOMBING INCIDENTS IN NORTH. GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY
ARE WORRIED OVER INCREASING BOLDNESS OF FAR RIGHT, AND DO NOT
WISH TO GIVE COMMUNISTS A CREDIBLE REASON FOR CLAIMING ELECTORAL
"FOUL." LOURENCO ALSO SAID THAT REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL
WOULD EXPEL MILITARY WHO ENGAGED IN PARTISAN
ACTIVITIES DURING ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. END SUMMARY

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1. REACTION TO BOMBINGS: MINISTER OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

ALMEIDA E COSTA AND POLICE AND NATIONAL GUARD COMMANDERS CONCLUDED BRIEF VISIT TO OPORTO TO DISCUSS ANTI-TERRORISM MEASURES JAN. 29 (REFTEL). ASKED ABOUT EXPLOSION OF SIX BOMBS IN BRAGA AND SUSPICIOUS FIRE IN COVILHA THAT MORNING, ALMEIDA E COSTA CONCERNED TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. HE NOTED THAT THE MANY BOMBS HAD NOT YET CAUSED ANY DEATHS, AND SAID THAT THE DIFFICULT JOB OF VIGILANCE MUST BE INTENSIFIED. HE SAID THAT HE HAD TOLD PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES DURING HIS VISIT OF URGENT NEED TO END CONFLICTS IN PORTUGUESE SOCIETY.

2. LOURENCO ON NONPARTISANSHIP: LISBON MILITARY REGION COMMANDER VASCO LOURENCO ADDRESSING TROOPS AT LISBON COMMUNICATIONS SCHOOL JAN 29 SAID HE WOULD INSIST ON ABSOLUTE NON-PARTISANSHIP AMONG ARMED FORCES. LOURENCO NOTED THAT POLITICAL PARTIES WOULD SEEK TO BRING THEIR IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATIONS INTO THE BARRACKS DURING THE ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN. BUT, HE WARNED THAT REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL IS DETERMINED TO EXPEL FROM THE ARMED FORCES ANY MILITARY MAN WHO SEEKS TO DIVERT ARMED FORCES FROM NON-PARTISAN ROLE. HE STATED: "IF PARTIES SQUABBLE WITH IDEAS, THE MILITARY POSSESSES THE WEAPONS." LOURENCO EMPHASIZED THAT HIS PURPOSE WAS TO AVOID PAST HISTORY OF MILITARY INTERVENTION IN POLITICAL PROCESS. HE ALSO DENOUNCED ACTS OF TERRORISM AND OTHER FORMS OF PRESSURE WHICH MILITARY IS PREPARED TO PREVENT.

3. CHARAIS EXPRESSES PREFERENCES: IN CONTRAST TO LOURENCO'S NON-PARTISANSHIP, CENTRAL MILITARY REGION COMMANDER CHARAIS EXPRESSED HIS HOPES THAT THE 1976 ELECTION RESULTS WOULD BE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF 1975, "OR EVEN MORE FAVORABLE TO THE TRANSFORMATION OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY INTO A SOCIALIST SOCIETY." HE STATED THAT THE ARMED FORCES MUST WATCH CLOSELY OVER THE POLITICAL PROCESS AS A REFEREE.

4. PACT NEGOTIATIONS: NEGOTIATIONS ON REVISION OF ARMED FORCES AGREEMENT - POLITICAL PARTIES PACT CONTINUED JAN 29 WITH LENGTHY MEETING BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PPD) AND REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL. FOLLOWING MEETING, PPD CHIEF NEGOTIATOR SPOKESMAN RUI MACHETE SAID "VERY CONFIDENTIAL
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SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS" HAD BEEN MADE DURING TALKS AND EXPRESSED HOPE FOR EARLY FINAL ACCORD.

5. COMMENT: ALMEIDA E COSTA AND LOURENCO EVIDENCE A GROWING CONCERN OVER BOMBING INCIDENTS AND OVER THE INCREASING BOLDNESS OF THE

FAR RIGHT. AS THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN OF ANTI-LEFT VIOLENCE WOULD GIVE THE COMMUNISTS A CREDIBLE ARGUMENT FOR CLAIMING ELECTORAL "FOUL".
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